

AN
ACCOUNT
OF THE
NATURE AND VIEWS,
OF THE
Philanthropic Society,

INSTITUTED IN MDCCLXXXVIII,

FOR THE

PREVENTION OF CRIMES, BY THE ADMISSION OF THE
OFFSPRING OF CONVICTS, AND FOR THE REFORM
OF CRIMINAL POOR CHILDREN.

TO WHICH ARE ANNEXED,

The Laws and Regulations of the
Society, &c.



LONDON:

PRINTED AT THE PHILANTHROPIC REFORM,
ST. GEORGE'S FIELDS.

APRIL, 1797.

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HIS GRACE THE DUKE OF LEEDS.

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Mr. William Houlston, Surgeon; Mr. J. H. Hooper, Apothecary.

Mr. W. Deey, Secretary, No. 4, King's Arms buildings, 'Change-alley, Cornhill.

Mr. J. Durand, Superintendant; Mr. T. Russel, Steward.

AN ACCOUNT, &c.

THE great object of the Philanthropic Society, which has now been instituted upwards of eight years, is to unite the purposes of *charity* with those of *industry and police*; and, while it affords relief to a description of persons the most to be pitied, to make it the *interest* of every individual to contribute to their relief.

Among the calamities to which the children of indigent parents are exposed, the want of moral and religious instruction, with early habits of industry, is the most to be lamented; the wretched objects are not only subjected to the temptations attendant upon poverty, but want dispositions and abilities to gain an honest livelihood. When to these circumstances are added the baneful examples of parents, whose crimes have subjected them to banishment, or an ignominious death, the condition of such children is truly pitiable, and demands the benevolence of the Christian, the interference of the statesman, and the exertions of the patriot.

There are few reflecting minds, or feeling hearts, but must have frequently lamented the fatal depravity which pervades the lower classes of the people, especially in the more populous parts of this kingdom; and there are few who have not, at one time or other, trembled for their own safety in consequence of this depravity.

With the increase of crimes our *penal laws* have multiplied; but while it is obvious that to prevent crimes is better than to punish them; and while every humane person must view with the deepest compassion and regret the numbers which are annually swept away by banishment, or consigned to an ignominious death, it is worthy of observation, that previous to this Institution, the proper remedy for these disorders had not been adverted to, nor any plan of PREVENTING POLICE so much as projected.

No nation has been more distinguished than Great Britain, for its various and excellent charities.—The truth, however is, that most of our charitable institutions have confined their beneficence to the deserving, but *unfortunate* part of the community; whilst the offspring of the *vicious* and *disbonest* have been unhappily involved in the guilt of their parents. Those who have violated the laws in any instance have been excluded from society, or at least have been treated with extreme severity when received again within its protection; and before this Institution, no asylum was ever opened for the *repenting* culprit, where the wanderer might be recalled from the error of his way, not by harsh and cruel treatment, but by gentleness and kindness; where he might prove the excellence and benefits of virtue, and contemplate her no longer under an austere and threatening aspect; where, by his own industry, he might contribute to his own subsistence, and be no longer under the NECESSITY of stealing for bread.* It is the peculiar charac-

* These unfortunate children are frequently *forced* on desperate courses; with blasted reputations, with dangerous connexions, and coming from suspicious places, what private family will open a door to receive them?

teristic of this Society, to *continue it's care and attention* till it's objects have attained to *such a mature age*, as to be able to think and act for themselves, and have acquired such habits as will ensure their future good conduct through life.

It is a well-known fact, that of the multitudes who fall victims to the violated laws of their country, the majority are trained and educated by experienced thieves, in a course of dishonesty, and are as regularly brought up to this way of life, as other persons are to common trades and professions. Hence their dexterity and adroitness in all the departments of this dangerous system; hence their union with each other, which renders their attempts so much the more formidable; which frequently eludes the pursuit of justice, and which even intimidates those who see the wrong publicly committed.

To break the chain of these pernicious confederacies, and to cut off all their supplies, is the intention of the Philanthropic Society, which aims at the prevention of crimes, by removing out of the way of evil counsel and example, those children whose destruction, without their assistance, would be inevitable.

In order to carry into effect these desirable purposes, the doors of the Reform have been thrown open for the reception of the infant offspring of *convicted felons*; for although such children may not have begun as yet the criminal practices of their profligate parents, yet it is to be feared, the pernicious sentiments, and principles imbibed from those parents, and their wretched connexions, will act so forcibly on their youthful minds, as to render

them more susceptible to temptations than the children of parents of an opposite description.

Another class still more wretched, is the next object of this Institution, viz. those who have already commenced their criminal course by the commission of *petty thefts, or fraudulent practices*, and in consequence of detection, have been brought before a magistrate and discharged for want of legal evidence to produce conviction, although no doubt remained of their actual guilt; also those who have been tried and convicted; but by reason of their tender years, or some other mitigating circumstances, are recommended by the Judges of assize, or other Magistrates, before whom such trial took place, as proper objects of this Institution; those recommendations are particularly attended to by the Committee.

For the employment of the children, a building has been erected with suitable workshops, &c. in *St. George's Fields*. In this REFORM, under the direction of the several master workmen, are carried on the trades of a Printer, Shoemaker, Taylor, Ropemaker and Twinespinner, and Stocking-weaver; to one or other of which the boys are apprenticed, carefully instructed, and excited to industry by rewards that bear a proportion to their exertions. The girls are at present educated as menial servants, and have otherwise abundant employment in washing the linen, making their own cloathing, shirts for the boys, &c. Several of them have been placed out in service, and having produced testimonials of their good behaviour, have received the rewards which the Committee have thought it right to hold out for their encouragement.

A Steward resides upon the spot to keep the accounts, distribute the provisions, &c. and the whole is under the care of a Superintendant, also resident on the spot, who sees that the master tradesmen do their duty, and that the children conduct themselves properly in every respect.

The important task of inculcating religion and morals is assigned to the Society's Chaplain; and the children are supplied with such books as are likely to promote those salutary ends.

The Society is under the direction of a President, twelve Vice-Presidents, a Treasurer, and a Committee of twenty-four Governors, chosen by the Society at large. Besides these, there are four Visitors chosen annually, and three Auditors of Accounts, the nature of whose respective offices will be better understood by referring to the Laws and Regulations. The Committee meet every Friday, at eleven o'clock, precisely, at the St. Paul's Coffee-house, in St. Paul's Church-yard.

The whole number of children of both sexes that have been received by the Society amount to 314, and the number now in the Reform is 134. Among these were many, who, though young in years, were yet old in iniquity.* There are amongst them boys who have been guilty of felonies, burglaries, and other crimes. Yet, singular as it may appear, these very children are now become no less remarkable for industry, decency, and obedience, than they formerly were for the opposite vices. Their diligence in their several employments, will be best estimated by

* See the annexed *Description of some of the Children*, page 17.

the annual statement of the profits of their labour, which are appropriated towards the support of the Institution.

A Sub-Committee of trade, finance, and resources also meet every Monday at the Reform, to superintend the domestic concerns, to adopt plans of œconomy, to examine the progress of the different trades, and to suggest the means of farther improving the resources of the Institution, &c.

Such are the grounds on which the Philanthropic Society now claims the attention and solicits the patronage of the Public.

If we regard humanity and religion, this Institution opens an asylum to the most forlorn of the human race. It befriends the most friendless. It saves the lives of a number of orphans and deserted children, and endeavours to rescue their souls from perdition.

If we regard national prosperity, and the public welfare, it is calculated to increase industry, and it directs that industry in the most useful and necessary channels.

If we regard self-interest, it's immediate object is to protect our persons from assault and murder, and our property from depredation; that our wealth may not endanger our lives, our repose be interrupted by thieves, nor our dwellings exposed to the desperate designs of midnight incendiaries.

The Committee is open to every Governor, who may

wish to attend, either for the purpose of obtaining information, or proposing whatever may be of use to the Institution; and the Society will feel themselves indebted to any well-disposed and judicious persons who will occasionally visit and inspect the Reform.

General Meetings are also held quarterly, where every Governor may attend and give his vote on any question.

It has been before observed, that this Society has existed upwards of *eight* years; before which period it could not be expected that any *succession* of objects could take place to make room for others; but at the last anniversary, in April, 1796, was exhibited the *first fruits* of this noble Institution, when *four young men*, who had regularly served their apprenticeships within the Reform, were presented, to a very numerous and respectable assembly, *regenerated* in their morals, compleat masters of their business, and are now gone forth into the world with character and abilities to acquire their future support, and add useful members to society; and there are several others now serving their apprenticeships to the masters within the Reform, who, there is every reason to expect, will go forth when their time is out, under the same advantages; and several have had their indentures assigned over to masters without the Reform, who have applied for them, and continue to express satisfaction with their behaviour.

In order to extend the benefits of the Institution to a still greater number of objects than the funds will enable them to maintain within the Reform, the Committee endeavour to obtain masters out of the Reform for those boys that have become entitled to good charac-

ters, by paying an annual sum with each for the two or three first years of their apprenticeship; and propose to distribute rewards to such of *those* boys who behave well, either at the end of their several apprenticeships, or at any intermediate periods, when they appear to merit them. And they continue the protection of the Society to all boys so placed out, putting each of them under the *guardianship* of some *one* of the Committee, or Governor of the Society, whose residence near the boy and his master may enable him to watch over the conduct of each towards the other.

FORM OF A LEGACY.

To such as are inclined to become Benefactors by Will, the following Form of a Legacy is recommended :

“ I give and bequeath to the Treasurer, for the time being, of a charity called or known by the name of THE PHILANTHROPIC SOCIETY, instituted in London in the year 1788, the sum of to be applied towards carrying on the benevolent designs of the said charity.”

N.B. Gifts, by will, of land, or of money, or stock to be laid out in the purchase of any lands, for charitable uses, are void by the Statute of Mortmain; but money or stock may be given by will, if not directed to be laid out in land.

* * * There is a General Meeting of the Society on the first Friday in March, June, September, and December. at one o'clock, of which notice is given in the public papers.

LAWS AND REGULATIONS

OF THE

PHILANTHROPIC SOCIETY.

THIS Society is established for the purpose of maintaining, educating, reforming, and instructing in various branches of useful industry, youth of both sexes, selected from the offspring of convicts, or from such children as are engaged in criminal and disorderly courses of life.

CONSTITUTION.

THE Institution is supported by voluntary contributions, and consists of an unlimited number of subscribers denominated Governors, out of whom a President, twelve Vice-Presidents, a Treasurer, and a Committee of twenty-four Governors are elected for the management and direction of the affairs of the Institution.

The general controul of the affairs of this Society is vested in all the Governors, convened every three months.

GOVERNORS.

THEIR QUALIFICATIONS AND PRIVILEGES.

A SUBSCRIBER of twenty guineas, paid at one time, or within one year, constitutes a Governor for life.

A Subscription of two guineas per annum, qualifies the subscriber to be elected on the Committee.

A Subscriber of one guinea per annum, is entitled to vote on all questions brought before the General Meeting.

GENERAL MEETINGS.

GENERAL Meetings shall be convened quarterly ; viz, on the *first* Friday in the month of March, June, September, and December, in every year.

Seven Governors shall constitute a General Meeting.

An extraordinary General Meeting of the Society may at any time be called by the Committee ; or upon a requisition in writing signed by ten Governors, addressed to the President ; or in his absence to any of the Vice-Presidents, or Treasurer, specifying the reason for calling such meeting, of which three days notice shall be given.

At each Quarterly Meeting an abstract of the accounts shall be laid before the Governors, and the minutes of the last Meeting, as well as those of all intermediate special General Meetings, and also the minutes of the Committee, shall be read ; and, if desired, the whole or any part thereof shall be read a second time before the question is put for confirmation.

Particulars of the business of the day are to be prepared by the Secretary, and given to the Chairman at every meeting ; and after reading the minutes of the preceding General and Special Meetings, and of the Committee, the other business stated in the summons is to be taken into consideration in the order in which it stands.

If a Special Meeting is summoned on any particular business, that business is to be mentioned in the summons, and first taken into consideration.

All motions shall be delivered to the Chairman in writing, and if seconded and carried in the affirmative, the same shall be entered in the Minute-book verbatim.

No question shall be put on any motion unless the same be seconded.

The Chairman shall have no vote at any meetings (except elections) but when the suffrages are equal.

The rough minutes of every General Meeting shall be signed by the Chairman; and, when entered fair by the Secretary in the Minute-book, shall be compared by the next Committee, and signed by the Chairman present.

ELECTIONS.

ALL Elections shall be by ballot; and the President, Vice-President, Treasurer, Committee, Visitors, Auditors, Chaplain, Physician, Surgeon, Apothecary, and Secretary, shall be elected by the Governors (entitled to vote) at a General Meeting.

When a vacancy shall happen in any of the above-mentioned offices, the day of Election shall be fixed by the Committee, who shall give public notice thereof one month previous to the same.

All other officers and servants of this Institution shall be elected by the Committee.

No Governor shall be entitled to vote at any General Meeting, unless he shall have been a Subscriber for six months; or a Governor for life

No Governor whose subscription is in arrear shall be entitled to vote at any Election before the same be paid.

TREASURER.

THE Treasurer shall keep an account of all monies received by him on account of the Society, and shall pay the same monthly into the hands of the receiving bankers, unless he shall be a banker himself, in which case the monies in the hands of the receiving bankers shall be paid to him quarterly, by drafts signed by the Chairman, and any two of the Committee in Committee.

All bills shall be paid by drafts on the Treasurer, signed by the Chairman and two of the Committee.

A receipt shall be given for every subscription paid for the benefit of this Institution; and no person shall be receivers or collectors, but such as the Committee think proper to appoint.

TRUSTEES.

ALL investments of monies in the public funds for the use of the Society shall be in the names of four Trustees appointed by a General Meeting; such Trustees to be parties to all bonds, contracts, and other engagements of the Society; and upon the death or resignation of either of them, his place shall be supplied at the next General Meeting.

COMMITTEE.

THE Committee shall consist of twenty-four Governors, the first six upon the list shall annually vacate their office, and be replaced by other Governors chosen at a General Meeting to be held on the first Friday in March; the six Governors so chosen to be placed at the bottom of the list.

The Committee shall meet once a week, and three of them shall be competent to proceed to business.

The President, a Vice-President, or the Treasurer, if present, shall preside at the Committee; and, in their absence, the Governor who stands first upon the list.

The Committee is empowered to establish such regulations respecting the education and employment of the children as they shall judge necessary; and to hire such master-workmen, assistants, and servants, and prescribe such regulations for the management of the Society's trades and domestic concerns, as they shall from time to time find expedient.

The Committee is empowered to encourage the industry and good behaviour of the servants and children, by the distribution of such gratuities from time to time, as it shall judge proper for that purpose.

The Committee is empowered to suspend any of the officers elected by the Governors at large, (calling within fourteen days) a special General Meeting, to consider the same.

The Committee is likewise empowered to remove all the other officers and servants of the *Reform*, as they shall judge expedient.

The Committee is empowered to appoint Sub-Committees out of the Governors of the Society at large, for such particular purposes as they may think proper.

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The Committee is open to every Governor of the Society, who may give his opinion ; but no Governor who is not on the Committee shall be entitled to vote.

No Governor who supplies the *Reform* with any kind of goods, or receives any emolument from the Society, shall be elected on the Committee.

VISITORS.

FOUR Visitors shall be elected annually from the Governors at large, at the General Meeting in March, whose duty it shall be to visit the *Reform*, and report to the Committee the state and conduct of the several officers, masters, mistresses, and servants ; to examine and select objects for admission into the *Reform*, and report them to the Committee. On the death or resignation of a Visitor, the Committee shall immediately proceed to elect a new one, who shall act as such, until the next General Meeting.

AUDITORS OF ACCOUNTS.

THREE Auditors of Accounts shall be elected annually from the Governors at large, at the General Meeting in March, whose duty it shall be to examine, once in every quarter, (and within a fortnight before every General Quarterly Meeting) all the accounts of the Society, and to lay an abstract of the said accounts, audited and signed by them, before such General Quarterly Meeting.

DESCRIPTION

OF A

FEW OF THE CHILDREN

THAT HAVE BEEN TAKEN INTO THE REFORM.

AMONG the objects received under the Society's protection, are several who have been taken from prisons; several who have been rescued from the retreats of villany, and the haunts of prostitution. The following account of some FEW of the objects will best illustrate the nature of the institution, and recommend it to the attention of a benevolent Public. In this account the names of the children are carefully concealed, because it would be cruel to brand them with their parents' crimes, or to record those faults of their own, which were once committed from necessity, but are now atoned for by amendment.

A boy aged 10. Lived in a notorious resort of thieves, in Goldsmith-alley, St. Giles's. His father and mother very abandoned people.

A girl aged 10, and a boy 7. Their father was executed for a robbery, and the mother left with four helpless children.

A boy aged 8. His mother a common vagrant, had beat him and left him almost dead at Hammersmith; when a waterman very humanely took him home and

maintained him for about three years. Two notorious thieves, however, in the neighbourhood, finding him to be a sharp boy, had instructed him to thief for their advantage.

A girl aged 10. Her mother was transported for life, for felony; and there is great reason to believe that her father died by the hands of the executioner. The girl is now in service.

A girl aged 8, and her sister. The mother of these girls is a drunken idle woman, and the father being incapable of bringing them up, through his wife's profligacy and misconduct, they were deemed proper objects for the Society's protection. The eldest girl is now in service.

A boy aged 9. Had a brother who was hanged for a murder in Essex, which it was imagined was committed at the instigation of a very profligate father. This boy was recommended by the late Lord Mount-Stuart.

A girl aged 10, and her brother. The mother was transported to Botany Bay. Before she left England, these poor unfortunate children were wandering about, a prey to hunger and misery; her husband being dead, and having no friend to snatch them from impending ruin, the Visitors of the Society enquired into the particulars, and were the means of their being received into the Reform. The girl has lately been placed out in service, and behaves well.

A boy aged 13. Was apprehended for theft by the Bow-Street officers; recommended by the late Sir Sampson Wright.

A girl aged 14. Whose father, a penny barber, and a notorious drunkard, was, at the time of her being taken into the Reform, confined in Newgate. Her mother is since dead. This girl is now in service.

A boy aged 12. His father, an abandoned villain, instructed the boy to commit a variety of thefts; for some of which he was committed to prison, but afterwards recommended to the Society's notice by the Magistrates of Essex.

A boy aged 3. The father and mother of this child underwent the sentence of the law for having been concerned in a most daring robbery committed in the daytime at the Folly-House, Blackwall. This boy was at first placed at nurse, but is now employed in the Rope-Ground.

A boy aged 13. Was taken up and committed to the New Compter, for stealing several articles. He was received on the recommendation of Mr. Alderman Boydell.

A boy aged 8. His father, then confined in Newgate, was one of the miserable convicts who made their escape from Botany-Bay, in an open boat, in which situation they remained ten days without food, and were brought to England in a Dutch vessel.

A boy aged 10. Charged before the Magistrates of

the public Office in Marlborough-Street, with stealing, in company with two other boys, knives, buckles, and other articles, from the shops in Tottenham-Court-Road. Those Gentlemen recommended him for admission.

A girl aged 10. Was tried at the Old Bailey, for stealing a gown, but acquitted through a defect in the evidence.

A boy aged 11. His father a dissolute fellow; his mother, convicted at the Old Bailey, was ordered for transportation, but died in Newgate. The boy was found in a state of vagrancy, deserted by his father and subsisting by begging; he usually lodged at night in a corner of the soldiers' guard-room, in Westminster.

A boy aged 13. Half brother to one of the men supposed to have committed the murder at Long-Sutton. These men lived concealed in a wood, and were supplied with food by this boy, under the direction of his father and mother, who are persons of abandoned character. The Magistrates of the Police-Office in Bow-Street, recommending him as a proper object, he was received.

A boy aged 9. Is the son of a man who was executed on Kennington-Common, and who earnestly begged of the Rev. Mr. Winckworth, that this boy, his only child, might be recommended for admission into the Philanthropic Reform. The father, a native of Ireland, had no settlement or connexion in this country, nor any person who would undertake the care of this unfortunate child.

A girl aged 11. Recommended by the Committee of the Asylum, from which place she was discarded, for having committed several petty thefts.

A boy aged 13. Was detected stealing candles from a church in Cornhill, and punished in Bridewell. He absconded soon after from his parents, taking with him a canvas-bag, candles, matches, flint and steel, and made an attempt to rob a house in the neighbourhood, but was discovered by the maid servant, concealed in the cellar. He confessed before a Magistrate that his design was to let in some other thieves. He was tried for this crime, but the evidence not being complete, he was remanded by the Lord Mayor, and by him recommended to the notice of the Committee.

A boy aged 7. His father a German, who had no legal settlement in this country, was transported for stealing a quantity of sugar.

A boy aged 10. His father was executed for a robbery.

A girl aged 7. An illegitimate child. Her father was drowned, when she was only three years old; and her mother, after this event, went to live with another man. Both of them deserted this poor infant, who supported herself by begging with her aunt, a woman, long known in the neighbourhood as a person of bad character.

A boy aged 9. Has been guilty of several acts of dishonesty, and being detected in some of them, was sent by a Magistrate to the prison in Cold-Bath-Fields, and afterwards recommended to the Society by Mr. Alderman Clarke.

A boy aged 7. The son of a man who was convicted of a robbery, and ordered for transportation. He is a na-

tive of Koningsberg in Prussia, and had no friends in this country.

A boy aged 10. This boy was tried, with his mother, at Reading assizes, before the Lord Chief Baron, for a robbery, and found guilty; but appearing to have acted under the influence of his mother, was sentenced only to six months imprisonment. At the Committee's request, his Lordship applied to the Secretary of State, by whose means His Majesty's pardon was obtained, on condition that he should be delivered over to the Society.

Fifty-three children have been received in the last year, viz.

35 Boys.

18 Girls.

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FINIS.

at the Philanthropic Reform, London-Road, St. George's Fields,

The following TRADES are carried on

For the BENEFIT of the INSTITUTION.

LETTER - PRESS

AND

Copper - Plate Printing,

WITH ACCURACY, NEATNESS, AND DISPATCH.

Shoemaking.

BOOTS and SHOES for LADIES and GENTLEMEN,

MADE IN THE BEST MANNER;

And all Sorts of STRONG SHOES, for Schools, Charities,
Army, Navy, or Exportation.

Tailors' Work,

Neatly and Fashionably executed for GENTLEMEN ;
SERVANTS' LIVERIES, &c.

Ropemaking and Twinespinning.

All Kinds of White ROPES, LINES, TWINES, and
PACKTHREAD.

Stocking - Weaving.

All which, being performed under the Inspection of able Masters, and on the most reasonable Terms, the COMMITTEE have no Doubt but complete Satisfaction will be given to those who may be pleased to attend to this Address, by transmitting their Orders to the *Steward of the Reform.*